1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

FOREWORD

By LORD LUGARD

THIS exhaustive treatise on one of the most important communities in Nigeria owes its inception to the generosity of the Rockefeller Foundation of New York, which placed a large sum at the disposal of the International Institute for the Study of African Languages and Cultures. Fellowships were instituted to enable specially trained students to undertake scientific research into the social organization of a selected unit of African society, the factors of social cohesion which operate to prevent its disintegration by contact with European civilization, the openings for co-operation, and the tendencies towards new groupings. Others were specially concerned with linguistic studies.

Dr. Nadel, of the University of Vienna, was one of the original Fellows, and he selected the Nupe of the middle Niger for his field of research. He brought to his task not only a thorough mastery of the technique of scientific investigation, but an original mind, and a sympathy with and understanding of the African, which won the confidence and friendship without which scientific qualifications can effect little.

His exceptional talents as a linguist enabled him not only to converse, at first in the *lingua franca* (Hausa), but in less than six months to acquire, and speak with fluency the very difficult 'tone' language of the Nupe. Many an English reader of this book may even envy his command of idiomatic English. The Nupe seem to have regarded him as an unusual phenomenon and conferred upon him a high title of tribal rank.

As an 'Anthropologist' he is concerned at the outset to explain that the term—whether 'functional', 'practical', or 'applied'—is ill adapted to the research he had undertaken. But surely the study of 'a native society in all its complexity', and the factors which had affected its social evolution are better described as 'Sociology' than as 'Anthropology'—which is defined as 'the study of man as an animal'? A clear understanding on the other hand of the connotation of the term 'Culture' as used by a highly qualified sociologist is essential to the appreciation of his work.

> 'Culture (he says) varies with environment and . . . expresses the changing dominant interests involved in social, political, and economic conditions. . . . It is not a sum total of discrete traits (but) . . . a conscious unity created by and embodied in a common group life (by) . . . the people who form the group, . . . specific to it and only to it irrespective of variations within, or similarities with groups outside, the tribal boundaries.' (pp. 14–15.)

The distinctive individuality of the 'tribe' depends in turn on the presumption that it is a 'group possessing more or less the same culture' and language.

The 'social and economic complexity' of the Nupe State as it exists